

Provision Included In Department of Justice Reauthorization Bill Passed House Judiciary Committee Today

Washington, D.C. -- Working to help keep our communities safe and secure, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez (CA-39) today announced that an important provision from her Bullying and Gang Prevention for School Safety and Crime Reduction Act of 2005 (H.R. 283) was included in the Department of Justice Reauthorization Bill (H.R.3402) which passed the U.S. House of Representatives today. The section of Sánchez' bill included in H.R.3402 will expand the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant fund to encompass bullying and gang prevention programs.

"I am very pleased the DOJ Reauthorization bill was reported out of the House Judiciary Committee today with support from both sides of the aisle. I especially appreciate Chairman Sensenbrenner's leadership in including this amendment," said Congresswoman Sánchez.

"As this bill funds law enforcement and community safety programs through 2009, its provisions will help local law enforcement agencies keep our communities safe. It will help prevent and reduce crime in our communities by providing additional assistance to the victims of crime, improving law enforcement training facilities, and making the DOJ's grants programs more efficient," added Sánchez.

Included in the DOJ bill is Sanchez' amendment, "The Juvenile Accountability Block Grant" program which is designed to provide grants to states for programs that will promote greater accountability in the juvenile justice system. Currently, these grants are NOT designated for bullying and gang prevention programs. Congresswoman Sanchez' provision amends the law to allow states and localities to use grant funds for bullying and gang prevention programs.

"Bullying and gangs are a growing problem in our communities that often leads to a future of criminal activity. The provision I've included in the DOJ Reauthorization bill will help local schools gain access to federal funding to implement proven, research-based bullying and gang prevention programs," said Congresswoman Linda Sánchez.

"It's critical that we take active steps to make schools safer and reduce crime. With this federal funding, schools will have the resources to implement bullying and gang prevention programs to help create a safe environment for our children, where they can learn and succeed without fear, hurt or intimidation," explained Sánchez.

Sánchez legislation has the support of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a bipartisan, non-profit organization of police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and crime victims dedicated to preventing crime and violence by finding ways to prevent kids from becoming criminals. The group recently completed a study titled, "Bullying Prevention Is Crime Prevention," that found children who are the victims of bullying are more likely to commit suicide, and bullies are more likely to become criminals as adults.